

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 CAIRO 01843 171743Z  
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00  
PM-05 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01  
PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 EB-08 AGRE-00 TRSE-00  
/100 W

-----032444 180225Z /12

R 171725Z JAN 78  
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4383  
INFO AMCONSUL ALEXANDRIA  
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM  
AMEMBASSY JIDDA  
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM  
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV  
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 01843

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: EG PINT PINS  
SUBJECT: EGYPTIAN RIOTS: ONE YEAR LATER

REF: CAIRO 1746 (NOTAL)

1. WARNING. ON EVE FIRST ANNIVERSARY JAN 18-19 FOOD RIOTS, MINISTER OF INTERIOR NABAWI ANNOUNCED SECURITY FORCES WILL CONFRONT FIRMLY, AND WITHOUT HESITATION, ANY ATTEMPT AT REPETITION LAST YEAR'S EVENTS. NABAWI CLAIMED COMMUNISTS DISTRIBUTING "SECRET" LEAFLETS ATTACKING GOVERNMENT, "AUTHORITIES", AND PEACE INITIATIVE, WHILE URGING RECONCILIATION WITH MOSCOW. THEIR GOAL, SAID NABAWI, IS TO HOLD DEMONSTRATIONS COMMEMORATING RIOTS. MINISTER NOTED 10 COMMUNIST LEADERS HAVE BEEN ARRESTED AS RESULT.

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2. CALM. DESPITE MINISTER'S REMARKS, POLICE CONTACTS TELL US THEY ANTICIPATE NO TROUBLE TOMORROW, OR IN COMING DAYS. RECENT CRACK-DOWN ON DOMESTIC LEFTISTS, AND DIMINUTION BLOC AND RADICAL ARAB ASSETS IN EGYPT, HAVE REDUCED POSSIBILITIES FOR LEFTISTS. NEVERTHELESS, SECURITY FORCES WILL BE PREPARED DEAL FIRMLY WITH ANY DEMONSTRATION, SHOULD THIS OCCUR.

3. CAUSE. PROXIMATE CAUSE FOR LAST YEAR'S RIOTING WAS PRECIPITOUS ABOLITION OF SUBSIDIES ON BASIC COMMODITIES. THIS NO LONGER LIVE ISSUE. GOE HAS PROMISED, MOST RECENTLY ON JAN 15, THAT SUBSIDIES WILL REMAIN ON BREAD, MEAT, AND OTHER FOODSTUFFS (REFTEL). OVERALL QUESTION OF SUBSIDIES BEING APPROACHED CAUTIOUSLY, WITH LITTLE PROSPECT OF ANY MAJOR REFORM IN NEAR FUTURE. WHILE THIS POSES ECONOMIC PROBLEMS FOR GOE AND IS EXPECTED EXACERBATE RELATIONS WITH IMF, IT GIVES GOVERNMENT POLITICAL BREATHING SPACE WHILE PEACE PROCESS UNDER WAY.

4. PEACE PROCESS. PEACE PROCESS, ITSELF, HAS DIVERTED DOMESTIC ATTENTION FROM ECONOMIC TO POLITICAL ISSUE. WITH POLITICAL SUBCOMMITTEE OPENING JAN 17, ALL POLITICALLY ACTIVE EGYPTIANS LOOKING TOWARD JERUSALEM, AND NOT HOME FRONT, AT THIS TIME. SO LONG AS PEACE PROCESS MOVES FORWARD, WE EXPECT THIS CONCENTRATION TO CONTINUE.

5. COMMENT: WE DO NOT ANTICIPATE REPETITION OF LAST YEAR'S RIOTING, AT LEAST IN NEAR FUTURE. SECURITY FORCES ARE MORE ALERT, POLITICAL LEADERS MORE ASTUTE, AND GENERAL ATTENTION FOCUSED ELSEWHERE. FAILURE OF PEACE INITIATIVES, HOWEVER, COULD TURN EGYPTIANS' ATTENTION TO ECONOMIC PROBLEMS, WITH POTENTIAL FOR RE-NEWED VIOLENCE. EILTS  
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## Message Attributes

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